

# South Atlantic Update

Published for fishermen & women and others interested in marine conservation

May, 1997

## Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Total Allowable Catch Increased for 1997/1998 Fishing Season

The council set annual quotas for Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel at the April meeting.

Atlantic king mackerel TAC was maintained at 6.8 million pounds, and the recreational bag limit remained 3 from New York through Georgia and 2 for Florida.

Atlantic Spanish mackerel TAC was raised by one million pounds from last year's level, making the 1997/98 TAC 8 million pounds. The recreational bag limit from New York to Key West, Florida was maintained at 10.

The Framework for these adjustments was submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 12, and will be implemented within two to three months.

Included as part of framework adjustments was a revision of the trip limits for Atlantic Migratory Group king mackerel. The council approved a revision to respecify trip limits in the southern portion of the fishery in numbers of fish rather than pounds. Fishermen from the area requested the change indicating that the average weight used to convert from fish to pounds tends to increase overall landings and may shorten their fishing season. Revision of trip limits is as follows:

<b>April 1 - March 31 NY/CT to Volusia/Flagler -</b>	<b>3,500 pounds</b>
<b>April 1 - October 31 Volusia/Flagler to Brevard/Volusia -</b>	<b>3,500 pounds</b>
<b>April 1 - October 31 Brevard/Volusia to Dade/Monroe -</b>	<b>50 fish</b>
<b>April 1 - October 31 Monroe County -</b>	<b>125 fish</b>

## Snapper Grouper Amendment 9 Public Hearing Schedule Announced

After making clarifications and deleting a couple of proposed actions from the document, the council approved Snapper Grouper Amendment 9 for public hearing.

This amendment proposes 11 management measures to reduce fishing mortality of species in the snapper grouper management unit.

For a listing of all proposed actions and options under consideration for this fishery, and the public hearing schedule, please see the snapper grouper attachment at the back of this newsletter.

## King Mackerel Permit Moratorium Still Pending Secretarial Approval

The South Atlantic Council is still awaiting Secretarial approval of Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagics, which includes king and Spanish mackerel.

The council submitted Amendment 8 in August, 1996. Once approved and implemented, Amendment 8 will create a commercial permit moratorium for both Atlantic and Gulf groups of king mackerel. After the moratorium is in place, only fishermen who held king and Spanish mackerel permits on or before October 16, 1995 (the control date for the fishery) will be allowed to fish commercially for king mackerel. The moratorium will expire on October 15, 2000.

Fishermen who qualify must apply for new commercial king mackerel permits no later than 90 days after the final rule to implement Amendment 8 is published in the Federal Register.

Questions should be addressed to Mark Godcharles at the National Marine Fisheries Service (813) 570-5305.

### Council Appoints New Advisory Panel Members

Congratulations to the following people for their recent appointments to serve on advisory panels:

#### Billfish (Reappointments)

Ken Hinman of Leesburg, VA  
H.E. Alderman of Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
Michael Bart of Savannah, GA  
Gary Johnson of Grifton, NC  
H. Cary Kresge, Jr. of Winter Park, FL  
Mike Leech of Pompano Beach, FL  
Mike Merritt of Nags Head, NC  
Daniel Patrick of Surfside Beach, SC  
George Patterson of Savannah, GA

#### Calico Scallop

Jay Moon of Merritt Island, FL  
David Bates of Cape Canaveral, FL

#### Habitat and Environmental Protection

James Holland of Brunswick, GA  
Diane Stephan of Washington DC  
Terry Pratt of Merry Hill, NC  
Dr. Paul Carlson of St. Petersburg, FL  
Dr. Douglas Rader of Raleigh, NC  
Mitch King of Brunswick, GA

#### Law Enforcement

Lt. John Davis of Portsmouth, VA

#### Spiny Lobster (Reappointment)

Bill Mansfield of Wilmington, NC

#### Shrimp

Kimberly Davis of St. Petersburg, FL

The South Atlantic Council Membership Directory contains a listing of all council members, council staff, Plan Development Teams, Scientific and Statistical Committee members, and advisory panel members who represent you when formulating management recommendations to the council. For a free copy, contact Susan Buchanan at the council office (803) 571-4366.

### Council Disbands Shark and Swordfish Advisory Panels

Recent amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act gave the Secretary of Commerce legal authority to establish advisory panels to provide management input for highly migratory species. Since the National Marine Fisheries Service will be convening its own advisory panels to assist in the management of highly migratory species, the South Atlantic Council has decided to disband its Shark and Swordfish Advisory Panels.

The council has encouraged NMFS to consider current South Atlantic advisory panel members when establishing APs to provide input for their highly migratory species program.

Back issues of the *South Atlantic Update* and council news releases can be downloaded from the council's webpage at:  
<http://www.safmc.nmfs.gov>

#### Commonly Used Acronyms

ABC - Allowable Biological Catch  
AP - Advisory Panel  
ASMFC - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
BRD - Bycatch Reduction Device  
EEZ - Exclusive Economic Zone  
EFH - Essential Fisheries Habitat  
FMP - Fishery Management Plan  
HAPC - Habitat Area of Particular Concern  
ITQ - Individual Transferable Quota  
MSY - Maximum Sustainable Yield  
NOAA - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NMFS - National Marine Fisheries Service  
OY - Optimum Yield  
SMZ - Special Management Zone  
SPR - Spawning Potential Ratio  
SSC - Scientific and Statistical Committee  
TAC - Total Allowable Catch  
TED - Turtle Excluder Device

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# Gail Workman Celebrates 20 Years with Council

Gail Workman is one of the few people who have experienced the evolution of the council process over the last 20 years. Initially an employee of the National Marine Fisheries Service's Office of Fisheries

Management in Washington, Ms. Workman was selected to serve on a task force to set up the eight regional councils in 1976. This proved to be no easy task, as Congress had just created the councils, and their role was yet to be defined.

In the Fall of 1976, a large meeting was held with the newly elected original council members from all eight councils. Ms. Workman helped facilitate that meeting, during which time committees were formed to select staff and locations for the eight regional offices.

**C**harleston, South Carolina was chosen for the location of the South Atlantic Council's

headquarters, and Gail Workman was hired as administrative support, one of four South Atlantic Council staff positions at that time. "I was a proponent of the council process from the beginning," said Ms. Workman. "One of the brightest moves Congress ever made was to put fisheries managers into the communities, in the midst of what we were managing," she said. She went on to explain that by living in the area they manage, council members have first-hand knowledge of what's happening in the ocean, and are better able to manage the fisheries.

When the councils were formed, the immediate goal of the new 200-mile zone was to protect U.S. fishing interests off the North American coast from being depleted by foreign vessels. The councils evaluated the stocks, factored in what American fishers took, then gave a percentage of the remaining fish to foreign fleets. As the councils began looking more into the biology of fish, they began factoring spawning seasons and ages, and other biological characteristics to determine what management was necessary to ensure enough fish were left in the ocean to spawn and maintain healthy stocks. As the American population increased over the years, so did the number of people catching fish, necessitating more conservation measures.



*Council Chairman Ben Hartig presents Gail Workman with a congratulatory gold oyster and pearl necklace in appreciation for her 20 years of service with the council.*

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*See Workman, page 6*





*Allen Branch, one of the council's original members, celebrates 58 years of marriage with his wife Kitty! Congratulations Allen and Kitty!*

### Council to Hold Four Annual Meetings Beginning in 1998

The council voted to reduce the number of annual council meetings to four per year, while convening committees and advisory panels in the interim as needed. The schedule is as follows:

March 2-6	Georgia
June 15-19	Florida
September 14-18	South Carolina
November 30-December 4	North Carolina

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### Remaining 1997 Council Meeting Schedule

June 16-20, 1997	Key West, FL
August 18-22, 1997	Charleston, SC
Nov. 17-21, 1997	Beaufort, NC

### Drop Me a Letter!

As the South Atlantic Council's public information officer and editor of the South Atlantic Update, I'm very interested in receiving suggestions and comments from my readers.



Feel free to submit a letter to the editor concerning council deliberations or articles published in the Update to: Susan Buchanan, Editor, South Atlantic Update, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, or

may be sent via the internet; Email address: Susan.Buchanan@noaa.gov

### Council Bids Farewell to Marilyn Lucy

The council regrets that staff member Marilyn Lucy is leaving Charleston. Marilyn has been the council's administrative assistant for three years. We wish Marilyn the best of everything as she moves her family to Michigan to be closer to her original home in Minnesota. *We'll miss you, Marilyn!*

## Council Supports Amendment to Reduce Effort in Shark Fishery

The South Atlantic Council provided NMFS with comments regarding the proposed rule for a shark limited access program. In a letter to Rebecca Lent, Chief of the NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division, the council supported the objective of the amendment to reduce fishing effort in the commercial shark fishery by implementing a license limitation program. However, the council proposed establishing an incidental commercial trip limit, to be equal to the recreational bag limit, for all commercial fishing vessels permitted in other fisheries, in lieu of the proposed two-tiered system consisting of directed and incidental permits.

"This would allow for a limited number of sharks taken incidentally in other fisheries to be sold and recorded in the landings data," said Robert K. Mahood, Executive Director of the South Atlantic Council. "Since fishermen will be required to sell to permitted dealers, it should be possible after the first year of implementation to determine the level of incidental harvest. Once the harvest level is determined and the impacts on the shark resource are known, further measures can be taken to address incidental harvest if necessary," he said.

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### NMFS Implements 1996/97 Seasonal Adjustments and Spanish Mackerel Trip Limits

Until the 1997/98 quotas are implemented, last year's adjustments, which will be implemented by NMFS on June 2, remain in place. Those are: 6.8 million pounds for Atlantic king mackerel, and 7 million pounds for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.

As part of last year's framework, NMFS also recently implemented daily trip limits for commercial vessels fishing in the EEZ off Florida for Atlantic Group Spanish mackerel.

In the northern zone boats fishing commercially for Spanish mackerel are limited to 3,500 pounds per day. The southern zone possession limits are as follows:

1. From April 1 - October 31: 1,500 pounds per vessel per day;
2. From November 1 until 75% of the adjusted allocation is taken:  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Unlimited;  
Other days: 1,500 pounds;
3. After 75% of the adjusted allocation is taken, 1,500 pounds per vessel per day for all days;
4. When 100% of the adjusted allocation is reached: 500 pounds per vessel per day to the end of the fishing year, which is March 31 (the estimated amount of this harvest is subtracted out of the quota up front).

At the April 1997 meeting, the council requested the Gulf Council to respecify commercial trip limits in the northern area of the eastern zone for Gulf Group king mackerel in numbers of fish rather than pounds. Fishermen from that area requested the change indicating that the average weight used to convert from fish to pounds tends to increase overall landings and may shorten their fishing season. They also pointed out, as did law enforcement officials, that it would facilitate at-sea enforcement.

The council also voted to recommend the Stock Assessment Panel factor the percentage reduction of finfish bycatch mandated in Shrimp Amendment 2 into the next Mackerel Stock Assessments.

Ms. Workman said throughout the council's history, South Atlantic Council members have been interested and sincere in their efforts to balance the social and economic impacts of management on fishers, with biological impacts on the fish.

From her perspective, the council's intent is not to mess up lives, but to create sound management for the purposes of conservation and maintaining a fisher's ability to continue his or her livelihood. "The council puts all the pieces together to come up with the best plan possible for the resource and the majority of fishers. This takes a lot of understanding and participation from the public in the council process," she said.

One way the council has tried to overcome public resistance is to put much effort into information and education. Ms. Workman commended the council members and staff on their efforts to build a better repore with the public, and she thinks it helps to be able to travel the coast to meet with and talk to fishers face to face about management issues.

"Our universe has expanded because we are getting the information out, and people are becoming aware and interested in working with the council," Ms. Workman said. "They are starting to see that we really aren't the bad guys," she said.

Ms. Workman and her husband Kenny live in Charleston. They have four children; Shelby, Phyllis, Linnette and Phillip.

## Council to Revisit Possible Dolphin Management

At the April meeting, the council asked staff to develop an options paper for possible dolphin management to be presented at the August meeting in Charleston. Though dolphin are included in the management unit for coastal migratory pelagics, at present there are no regulations for this species at the federal level.

**A**t the request of fishermen concerned with the growing numbers of longline vessels targeting dolphin, the council took a number of proposed actions for dolphin management to public hearing as part of Amendment 8 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan in early 1996. During those hearings, several fishermen testified that dolphin stocks seemed to be healthy. In addition, data showed landings to be stable, so the council decided management was not necessary at that time.

Recent concerns regarding increasing catches and bycatch of small billfish on dolphin longlines have prompted the council to look into this issue again at the August meeting.

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## NMFS to hold Essential Fish Habitat Public Hearing in Charleston, S.C.

The National Marine Fisheries Service published a proposed rule in the Federal Register on April 23, specifying general council guidelines for meeting the essential fish habitat mandates of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Individuals desiring to comment on this issue should write to NMFS by June 6, 1997 at: Director, Office of Habitat Conservation, Attention EFH, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3232. At the request of the South Atlantic Council and other interested parties, the comment deadline was extended from May 23 to June 6.

NMFS will also accept public comments at a public hearing on May 28, 1997 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Town and Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, S.C. 29407. This hearing is being held in conjunction with the South Atlantic Council's Habitat and Environmental Protection Advisory Panel meeting.

## Coast Guard Advises Council on Enforceability of Fisheries Regulations

Ed Pino knows first hand about the search and rescue mission of the United States Coast Guard, because he's been on both the giving and receiving ends of it.

Back in the 80s, Ed, then a charter pilot, was returning to the states from Nassau when the plane "ditched", or crashed into the sea. Delivered safely back to land by the Coast Guard, Ed found inspiration and a second career began.

**L**ieutenant Commander Eduardo Pino has been a "coastie" for almost 13 years. He said he likes the multi-purpose mission of this military agency.

"The Coast Guard's mission is not just training for war, but it's an everyday job of saving lives, enforcing immigration laws, stopping drug importation..." and yes, he said, enforcing federal fisheries regulations.

Although Ed's expertise lies in many areas, his current specialty is fisheries. He is employed by Coast Guard District 7 in Miami as a Limited Marine Resources Officer, and represents the District Commander, who holds a non-voting seat on the South Atlantic Council as the Coast Guard liaison (Coast Guard District 7 incorporates the South Atlantic region between the NC/SC border and St. Mark, FL, including the Caribbean).

"The Coast Guard has two main objectives on the council: to advise on enforceability of proposed laws and safety aspects of those laws," he said. Pino explained that regulations which are unenforceable are generally ineffective.

Some management strategies are easier to enforce than others. For example, Pino said Coast Guard officers prefer fish limits by count rather than pounds because it's easier to count fish at sea than to guess what 500 pounds look like. They also prefer closed areas and seasons where it's easy to determine who's not supposed to be fishing in an area at any given time.

The council and fishermen have been frustrated by the lack of adequate law enforcement on the water. Pino said like most other federal agencies, the Coast Guard is doing the best it can, in looking for ways to improve and utilize current resources in the most effective manner. In an era of budgetary constraints, however, he does not see more funding for law enforcement officers or patrol vessels. Keeping in mind the multi-purpose characteristics of the Coast Guard, what resources are available must be allocated and distributed among the many tasks at hand, fisheries enforcement being only one part.

"The best thing we can do is put our efforts where they will be most beneficial in protecting the resources and eliminating the economic advantage to the guy who cheats," Pino said. This means keeping a high profile on the water as a deterrent factor, and prosecuting to the fullest extent possible



*See "Pino", next page*



those who violate the law.

Coast Guard officers spend much of their time training and keeping up with changing regulations. As a Limited Marine Resources Officer, Pino reviews all council fishery management plans and amendments, writes agency comments on proposed actions, which include enforcement and safety concerns, makes enforcement recommendations to officers on cutters out at sea, attends all council meetings to offer input and give a Coast Guard agency report, and takes notes to report council deliberations back to his commander.

Pino holds a commercial pilot's license and a B.S. degree in management. He is a graduate of Coast Guard Officer Candidate School, and various other specialized schools, such as the National School of Search and Rescue and the Coast Guard School of Maritime and Law Enforcement. He lives in Miami with his wife, Gina and his two daughters, Jessica, 11 and Janelle, 9. In his spare time, Ed likes to fly private planes and spend time with his family.

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## **Council Requests Change for Penalty Schedule Authority**

The NOAA General Council penalty schedule has recently come under scrutiny by both the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils.

In a letter to William Daly, Secretary of Commerce, council Chairman Ben Hartig writes that the council can no longer depend on the management measures it develops to protect the resource and assure equitable allocation because of the lax prosecution policies and enforcement guidance established by General Council.

"This policy undermines conservation and management in the southeast..." he writes.

The council requested that the Secretary of Commerce transfer authority for setting penalty schedules from NOAA General Council to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

"This would allow managers within NMFS and the councils to base penalties for violations on conservation priorities," Chariman Haritg writes.

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## **Law Enforcement Report**

Between February 7, 1997 and April 10, 1997, the following violations were detected in South Atlantic federal waters:

Officers of the USCG Cutter Point Steele cited a Key West operator for possession of reef fish without a valid permit on March 6. The illegal product was subsequently seized by the officers.

On March 8, officers from the USCG Station Hatteras acting on instructions from a Special Agent of NMFS, cited a New Jersey operator for landing a bluefin tuna during the closure of the fishery.

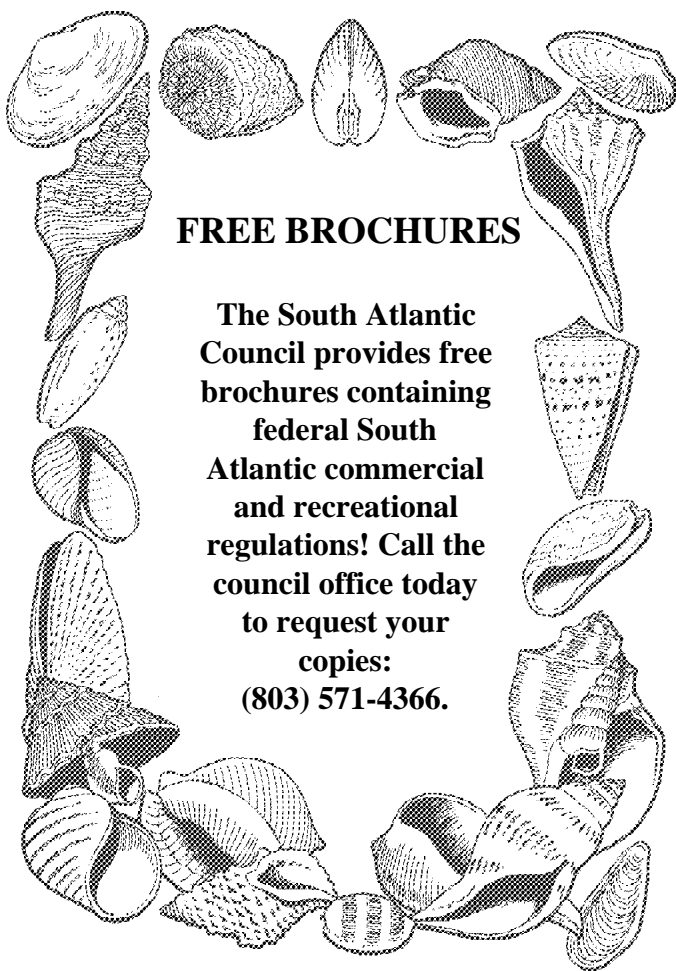
USCG Station Georgetown seized approximately 2,000 pounds of swordfish from a local longline vessel on April 7. The vessel had harvested 21 undersized swordfish out of a total of 49 fish. The NMFS Special Agent instructed the Coast Guard to seize all swordfish on board. In addition, 51 pounds of illegal swordfish fillets were seized. The 2,000 pounds of seized swordfish was sold at fair market price.

On March 11, a Special Agent with NMFS began an investigation involving the shooting of a marine mammal in the Florida Keys.

On March 4, USCG Station Georgetown and a Special Agent of NMFS apprehended a Barnegat Light operator possessing five undersized swordfish. The swordfish were seized and sold, and the operator was issued a \$1,000 summary settelement assessment.

On March 16, Florida Marine Patrol officers cited a Pompano Beach operator for possessing shark fins after the first point of landing. The officers seized the illegal product and a Special Agent of NMFS subsequently issued the operator a \$400 summary settlement assessment.





### FREE BROCHURES

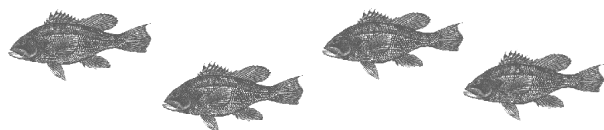
**The South Atlantic Council provides free brochures containing federal South Atlantic commercial and recreational regulations! Call the council office today to request your copies: (803) 571-4366.**

## Council Sets Control Date for Black Sea Bass Pot Fishery

A control date of April 23, 1997 has been established for the black sea bass pot fishery in the South Atlantic EEZ.

Establishment of the control date is intended to discourage new entry into the fishery while the council considers whether there is need for further management actions.

A copy of the Federal Register Notice implementing the control date may be obtained by calling Dr. Peter Eldridge at NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive, North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702; phone: (813) 570-5305.



## NMFS Implements Shrimp Amendment 2

The use of federally-approved bycatch reduction devices in shrimp nets trawling in South Atlantic federal waters became mandatory by law on April 21, 1997.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council developed Amendment 2 to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan to reduce the numbers of incidentally-caught juvenile finfish, particularly weakfish and Spanish mackerel, by shrimpers.

This amendment specifies certified BRDs to include only the extended funnel, expanded mesh, and the fisheye. A detailed description of each BRD is given in the final rule implementing the amendment, which may be obtained from:

**Dr. Peter Eldridge, Fishery Operations Branch, NMFS,  
9721 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702; telephone: (813) 570-5305.**

Amendment 2 also establishes a procedure for testing the effectiveness of new or modified BRDs for certification. Fishermen who are interested in developing or improving a bycatch reduction device are encouraged to work with their state management agency.



Amendment 2 and the BRD Testing Protocol Manual may be obtained from Susan Buchanan at the council office by calling (803) 571-4366.

## Visit the South Atlantic Council!

### South Atlantic Council's Homepage Address:

<http://www.safmc.nmfs.gov>

### Council's E-Mail Address:

[safmc@noaa.gov](mailto:safmc@noaa.gov)

**Note:** This is a new email address. Mail may still be sent to the old address.

## June Meeting Agenda

The next council meeting will be held at the Pier House Resort, One Duval Street, Key West, FL 33040; telephone: (305) 296-4600; (800) 327-8340



Monday, June 16, 1997

**1:00-3:00**

Joint Golden Crab Committee and Advisory Panel

**3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.**

Joint Spiny Lobster Committee and Advisory Panel

**6:00**

ACCSP Scoping Meeting



Tuesday, June 17, 1997

**8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

Habitat and Environmental Protection Committee

**1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.**

Calico Scallop Committee

**6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.**

Snapper Grouper Amendment 9 Question-Answer Session

**7:00 p.m. until all business is complete**

Snapper Grouper Amendment 9 Public Hearing



Wednesday, June 18, 1997

**8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.**

Snapper Grouper Committee

**10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon**

Controlled Access Committee

**1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.**

Mackerel Committee



Thursday, June 19, 1997

**8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

Council Session



Friday, June 20, 1997

**8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**

Council Session

Please contact the council office or webpage for a detailed agenda.

## Wide Range of Options Ahead for Mackerel

In June the council will review an options paper for Amendment 9 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan.

The options paper examines a number of issues regarding management of king and Spanish mackerel, ranging from extending the permit moratorium on king mackerel to the possible development of a limited access system for both fisheries.

Amendment 9 may also address the management jurisdiction of mackerels by fixing boundaries between the two councils. Currently, Atlantic and Gulf groups of king and Spanish mackerel are jointly managed by the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils. The social and economic characteristics of these fisheries vary from region to region which often results in different management strategies between councils.

By separating management measures, each council would be able to pursue the management strategy it deems necessary to address the particular characteristics of a fishery in a more timely manner.

## Council to Develop Calico Scallop Management Plan

The council will review an options paper regarding the development of management measures for the calico scallop fishery in June.

The council is considering a Calico Fishery Management Plan to possibly prohibit scalloping in the area closed in and around the Oculina Bank to rock shrimping as specified in Amendment 1 to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan. The council will also consider limited entry, size regulations and other potential measures. Concerns have been raised about damage to oculina coral caused by calico dredges.

The council held scoping meetings in May/June 1995 to collect comments on this issue. The council will meet with the Calico Scallop Advisory Panel before taking proposed actions out to public hearing.

## Atlantic State and Federal Cooperative Seeking Public Input for Development of Standardized Fisheries Data Collection

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As a partner in the Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), the South Atlantic Council is holding a scoping meeting on Monday, June 16 at 6:00 p.m. in Key West, Florida to solicit ideas from the public on ways to improve commercial and recreational fisheries data collection.

For years, biologists, fishery managers, and user groups have recognized that available fisheries data do not provide the quality of information we need to best achieve our common goals of protecting, restoring, and conserving marine resources.

For example, management of bluefish, a migratory species ranging from Maine to Florida, has been seriously hampered by a lack of adequate length and age data. Such problems contribute to a high degree of uncertainty and distrust in stock assessments, upon

which management decisions are based. Frustration over this and similar problems has prompted federal, regional, and state fisheries agencies along the Atlantic coast to join forces with fishermen to improve the situation.

The ACCSP, a cooperative state-federal marine and coastal fisheries data collection program, is bringing fishermen and managers together to design a system that is workable, consistent, and effective all along the Atlantic coast.

The ACCSP is currently investigating the successes, problems and redundancies of existing fisheries data collection programs. Input is being sought from all interested user groups to ensure that the ACCSP meets the needs of a coastwide data collection and management system. Ideas given at public

meetings or in writing will ensure that future data collection processes will incorporate the

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**To find out more about ACCSP,  
visit the program web site at:  
<http://www.safmc.nmfs.gov/accsp.html>**

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everyday, real-world concerns of fishermen and managers.

Now is your chance to get involved in the design of the program. This scoping meeting provides you the opportunity to give recommendations pertaining to fisheries data collection in the development of this program.

**Comments may be mailed to:  
ACCSP Program Manager,  
1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth  
Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 289-6400**

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## Habitat and Environmental Protection Advisory Panel to Address Essential Fisheries Habitat Mandates

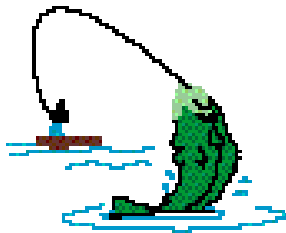
At the April meeting, the Habitat Committee recommended the council establish a three-phased approach to meet the habitat requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act amendments: (1) develop a habitat plan which will serve as a source document describing essential fisheries habitat (EFH); (2) develop a comprehensive amendment which would amend each of the existing fishery management plans, identifying and describing EFH and addressing impacts of fishing gear and/or fishing practices on EFH; and (3) establish a monitoring program for each fishery management plan to determine new impacts from fishing gear and/or fishing practices in an effort to minimize to the extent practicable the adverse impacts on EFH.

The council's Habitat Advisory Panel will meet in Charleston, SC on May 28-29 to discuss these and other issues. The public is welcome to attend. Call the council office for an agenda.

## Spiny Lobster Advisory Panel and Committee to Discuss Stock Status



The Spiny Lobster Advisory Panel will meet in June with the committee to discuss the status of the Florida trap certificate program for spiny lobster. They will review the stock status and determine whether there is need for a plan amendment or framework adjustment at this time.



## Snapper Grouper Amendment Updates

The council submitted Amendment 8 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan to NMFS on May 19 for a 14-day review. This amendment is scheduled to be sent to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation on June 9, 1997.

**R**egulations implementing the limited entry program for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery are expected to become effective by January 1, 1998.

Amendment 9 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan is scheduled for public hearing from June 17-July 2, 1997. The council will review public comment before finalizing Amendment 9 at the August meeting. See the snapper grouper attachment at the back of this newsletter for the public hearing schedule and a listing of all actions and options for comment.

## Council to Review Options for Sale of Recreationally-Caught Fish Issue

At the June meeting, the council will review possible options for consideration regarding the council's policy of allowing the sale of recreationally-caught fish.

The options paper was created based on public comments collected during scoping meetings held on this subject in 1995-1996. Input varied, ranging from recommendations of no change (continue to allow the sale) to prohibiting sale of all fish harvested without a commercial permit.

If approved for public hearing, the options paper would become a general amendment to all council fishery management plans, and the public hearing schedule would be announced in the next *Update*.

## Golden Crab Advisory Panel to Meet With Committee



The Golden Crab Advisory Panel is scheduled to meet with the Golden Crab Committee in June to discuss the status of the resource and examine the data collection program implemented for this fishery. The AP and Committee will also hear a report on the number of permits that have been issued for this fishery.

The Golden Crab Fishery Management Plan implemented a limited entry program to cap overall effort until further studies could give a clear picture of the stock status. The Advisory Panel and Committee will review current management and decide if the development of a plan amendment is necessary.



**Please contact the following state agencies for regulations up to three miles offshore (state waters) in the South Atlantic:**

Florida Marine Fisheries Commission  
2540 Executive Center Circle West, Suite 106  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(904) 487-0554

Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Coastal Resources Division  
One Conservation Way  
Brunswick, GA 31523-8600  
(912) 264-7218

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
P.O. Box 769  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
(919) 726-7021

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Marine Resources Division  
P.O. Box 12559  
Charleston, SC 29412  
(803) 795-6350

The South Atlantic Council, one of eight U.S. regional fishery management councils, establishes conservation measures to ensure the viability of marine resources in federal waters (from three to two hundred nautical miles) off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and east Florida. Fishery Management Plans prepared by the council are designed to produce optimum yield, while preventing overfishing of our valuable resources. Council staff is available to answer questions during business hours by telephone at (803) 571-4366; by FAX at (803) 769-4520; or by E-Mail at [safmc@noaa.gov](mailto:safmc@noaa.gov).

***Editor's Note***

The South Atlantic Update is published by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Its purpose is to report developments in fisheries management that would be of interest to its readers. Please credit the council when reprinting articles used in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to submit information or articles pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, or letters to the editor on a pertinent issue, is invited and encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Susan Buchanan, Editor, South Atlantic Update, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, or may be sent via the internet; Email address: [Susan.Buchanan@noaa.gov](mailto:Susan.Buchanan@noaa.gov)



A publication of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA77FC0002.

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- **Snapper Grouper  
Amendment 9 Public  
Hearing Schedule  
Announced.**
- **See Snapper Grouper  
Attachment at the back of  
the newsletter for hearing  
dates and locations, and a  
listing of proposed actions.**

